

O 210918Z MAY 89
FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8946
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE
AIT TAIPEI IMMEDIATE
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL SHANGHAI IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL SHENYANG IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CHENGDU POUCH)

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BEIJING 14047

CINCPAC FOR FPA

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [SOCI](#) [CH](#)
SUBJECT: SITREP NO. 6: THE SCENE ON TIANANMEN, THE
MILITARY SITUATION, POSSIBLE CENTRAL
COMMITTEE MEETING, CHINESE PRESS PLAY

REFS.: A. BEIJING 14038 B. BEIJING 14039
- C. BEIJING 14037 D. BEIJING 14029
- E. BEIJING 14019

11. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

12. SUMMARY: BETWEEN 10 AND 20,000 STUDENTS OCCUPIED TIANANMEN SQUARE AT NOON ON MAY 21. THE ATMOSPHERE WAS FESTIVE AND THEY APPEARED CONFIDENT. ONLOOKERS NEAR THE SQUARE NUMBERED BETWEEN 50,000 AND 80,000. ACCORDING TO A STUDENT ON THE SQUARE, 100-200 HUNGER STRIKERS REMAIN. STUDENTS CONTINUE TO CONTROL MUCH OF CENTRAL BEIJING IN THE AREA OF TIANANMEN. THEY CONTROL ACCESS TO THE CITY THROUGH AN ELABORATE SYSTEM OF BLOCKADES. STUDENT ORGANIZERS APPEAR TO BE IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH DEMONSTRATORS MANNING THE ROADBLOCKS AND CAN DISPATCH REINFORCEMENTS TO WEAK POINTS. THIS SUGGESTS TO US THAT DEMONSTRATORS MAY BE GETTING SUPPORT FROM NEIGHBORHOOD PARTY AND GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS.

13. AT 11:00 PM, MAY 20, A POLITICAL DECISION WAS MADE TO MOVE TROOPS INTO TIANANMEN AT 2:00 AM, MAY 21. THE ORDER WAS RESCINDED BETWEEN 1:00 AM AND 2:00 AM, ACCORDING TO DAO BEIJING. AT PRESENT, STUDENTS APPEAR TO FEAR AN ASSAULT ON THE SQUARE EITHER FROM BEIJING'S TUNNEL SYSTEM OR VIA MILITARY TRAIN INTO THE CITY.

14. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE HELD A MEETING BETWEEN MAY 19 AND MAY 21 AT WHICH AT LEAST ONE MEMBER STRONGLY OBJECTED TO MARTIAL LAW. WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO CONFIRM THIS. PEOPLE'S DAILY COVERAGE OF THE EVENTS OF THE LAST TWO DAYS SUGGESTS CONTINUED RESISTANCE TO LI PENG IN THE MEDIA. END SUMMARY.

THE SCENE ON TIANANMEN AS OF 12:15 PM, MAY 21

15. STUDENTS REMAIN IN CONTROL OF CENTRAL BEIJING. ACCORDING TO POLOFFS ON TIANANMEN SQUARE, THE NUMBER OF ONLOOKERS IN THE AREA ROSE BETWEEN 10:00 AM AND NOON. APPROXIMATELY 50-80,000 ONLOOKERS CROWD CHANGAN AVENUE FROM THE BEIJING HOTEL IN THE EAST TO THE WEST SIDE OF THE SQUARE. POLOFFS HAVE REPORTED THAT STUDENTS ON THE SQUARE ITSELF NUMBER BETWEEN 10 AND 20,000. A STUDENT GUARD ON THE SQUARE TOLD POLOFFS THAT BETWEEN 100 AND 200 HUNGER STRIKERS REMAIN. THE ATMOSPHERE ON THE SQUARE IS FESTIVE. MANY ONLOOKERS STROLL ABOUT IN THEIR SUNDAY BEST. STUDENT DEMONSTRATORS APPEAR CONFIDENT, POLOFFS REPORTED.

¶6. THE PATTERN OF ACTIVITY ON THE SQUARE HAS REMAINED FAIRLY CONSTANT OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS. GENERALLY, THE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE AT TIANANMEN DWINDLE THROUGHOUT THE MORNING AND BEGIN TO RECOVER DURING THE AFTERNOON. CROWDS BEGIN ARRIVING DURING THE EVENING BETWEEN 7:00 PM AND 8:00 PM AND PEAK IN THE LATE EVENING.

ABOUT BARRICADES

¶7. AS REPORTED EARLIER, STUDENTS APPEAR TO CONTROL ACCESS TO THE CENTRAL PART OF THE CITY THROUGH A SYSTEM OF BARRICADES AROUND THE SECOND AND THIRD RING ROADS AND AT OTHER MAJOR ROAD APPROACHES TO THE CITY. AT TIMES, WE HAVE SEEN BARRICADES OF PEOPLE OR VEHICLES ON THE CLOSER APPROACHES TO TIANANMEN SQUARE AS WELL.

¶8. POLOFF VISITING ONE SUCH ROADBLOCK AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE THIRD RING ROAD AND JIANGUOMENWAI AVENUE REPORTED THAT THERE ARE MORE THAN 50 BUSES IN THE AREA. FOURTEEN BUSES BENEATH THE JIANGUOMENWAI AVENUE OVERPASS CONTROL PASSAGE ON THE THIRD RING ROAD, WHICH RUNS NORTH-SOUTH. THE BUSES HAVE LEFT A ONE LANE OPENING ALONG THE ROAD AND CAN EASILY BLOCK TRAFFIC BY DRIVING INTO THE LANE. SEVERAL OTHER OF THE BUSES BLOCK BOTH ENDS OF THE OVERPASS. MANY OF THE REMAINING BUSES PARKED ALONG JIANGUOMENWAI UP TO XIDAWANG ROAD COULD BE PULLED INTO THE AVENUE TO BLOCK TROOPS, ACCORDING TO POLOFF.

¶9. POLOFF REPORTED THAT CITY BUS DRIVERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MOVING THEIR VEHICLES AT THIS BARRICADE. ONE APPARENTLY FEARLESS DRIVER WITH WHOM POLOFF TALKED STATED THAT HE AND HIS FELLOWS ARE CONFIDENT THAT THEIR BLOCKADES WILL STOP PLA TANKS. (BUT WE DOUBT IT.) HE ADDED THAT DRIVERS INTEND TO REMAIN AT THE INTERSECTION AND WILL NOT RETURN TO WORK ON MAY 22.

¶10. ACCORDING TO A STUDENT AT QINGHUA UNIVERSITY WHO SPOKE WITH AN EMBASSY FCS OFFICER PRESENT AT THE CAMPUS THIS MORNING, STUDENTS ON CAMPUS ARE IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH DEMONSTRATORS MANNING THE BARRICADES AND ARE ABLE TO DISPATCH REINFORCEMENTS TO WEAK SPOTS IN THE SYSTEM. EMBOFFS HAVE WITNESSED LARGE CONVOYS OF CIVILIAN MOTORCYCLES ON CHANGAN AVENUE. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THIS IS ONE METHOD OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN STUDENT ORGANIZERS AND DEMONSTRATORS. APPARENTLY STRONG COOPERATION AMONG WORKERS, STUDENTS, AND OTHERS AT THE BLOCKADES SUGGESTS TO US THAT DEMONSTRATORS MAY BE GETTING SUPPORT FROM NEIGHBORHOOD PARTY AND GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS.

MILITARY SITUATION

¶11. DAO HAS REPORTED EXTENSIVELY ON THE MILITARY SITUATION (REFS. B-E). BASED ON DAO OBSERVATIONS OF PLA ACTIVITIES AND ON DAO CONVERSATIONS WITH MILITARY PERSONNEL, AT APPROXIMATELY 11:00 PM, MAY 20, A POLITICAL DECISION WAS MADE TO MOVE ON TIANANMEN AT 2:00 AM. THE ORDER APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN RESCINDED BETWEEN 1:00 AM AND 2:00 AM ON MAY 21. ACCORDING TO DAO OBSERVERS, TROOPS AT GUCHENG, ON THE WESTERN SIDE OF THE CITY, STOOD DOWN FROM THEIR TRUCKS AND BEGAN MINGLING WITH THE LOCAL POPULACE AT ABOUT 8:15 AM. IT IS RUMORED THAT AT ABOUT 6:15 AM ON MAY 21 LI PENG ANNOUNCED THAT THE ORDER HAD BEEN RESCINDED.

¶12. AS OF LATE MORNING, PLA TRUCKS CONVOYING SOLDIERS AT GUCHENG HAD TURNED AROUND TO PARK FACING IN A DIRECTION AWAY FROM THE CITY. STUDENTS AT TIANANMEN SQUARE AND AT BEIJING UNIVERSITIES REPORTEDLY FEAR THAT THE PLA WILL ATTEMPT TO TAKE THE SQUARE TONIGHT VIA BEIJING'S UNDERGROUND TUNNEL NETWORK OR VIA A MILITARY TRAIN THROUGH BEIJING STATION.

¶13. AN AMERICAN CITIZEN REPORTED TO EMBASSY AFTERNOON OF MAY 21 THAT PLA TROOPS HAD TAKEN OVER BEIJING'S CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION. POLOFF WHO SUBSEQUENTLY WENT TO THE STATION SAW NO SIGNS OF A PLA PRESENCE INSIDE OR OUTSIDE OF THE STATION. HE DID NOT, HOWEVER, OBSERVE THE PLATFORM AREAS, WHICH REQUIRE A TICKET TO ENTER. ALTHOUGH CHINESE STUDENTS IN THE VICINITY OF THE STATION ASSURED HIM THAT THE SOLDIERS WERE THERE, THEY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THEY HAD NOT THEMSELVES SEEN THEM. ONE STUDENT ON TIANANMEN SQUARE REPORTED THAT TROOPS HAD ALREADY LEFT THE STATION.

¶14. AN AMERICAN STUDENT AT BEIJING UNIVERSITY REPORTED TO EMBASSY THAT HE WITNESSED TANKS AND PLA SOLDIERS AT AN INTERSECTION IN THE VICINITY OF BEIJING UNIVERSITY ON THE MORNING OF MAY 21. STUDENTS WERE CIRCULATING AMONG THE SOLDIERS, ACCORDING TO THE AMERICAN. HE DID NOT SAY HOW MANY TANKS WERE PRESENT. WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO CONFIRM THIS REPORT. THE FCS OFFICER AT QINGHUA REPORTED WITNESSING LARGE CROWDS OF STUDENTS AT THE GATES OF BEIJING AND PEOPLE'S UNIVERSITIES. HE DID NOT REPORT HAVING SEEN ANY PLA TROOPS IN THE VICINITY OF BEIJING'S UNIVERSITY DISTRICT, HOWEVER.

ANONYMOUS CALLER REPORTS CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING

¶15. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE PARTY CONVENED A CENTRAL COMMITTEE (CCPCC) MEETING SOMETIME BETWEEN THE NIGHT OF MAY 19 AND EARLY THIS MORNING AT WHICH MEMBERS DISSENTED WITH THE DECISION TO EMPLOY THE PLA TO RESTORE ORDER IN BEIJING. AN ANONYMOUS CALLER WHO PHONED CONGEN SHENYANG ON THE MORNING OF MAY 21 SAID THAT THE PARTY HAD CONVENED A CCPCC MEETING AND THAT CHAIRMAN OF THE ALL CHINA FEDERATION OF LABOR UNIONS NI ZHIFU CONDEMNED THE DECISION TO IMPOSE MARTIAL LAW.

¶16. ACCORDING TO THE CALLER, NI DEMANDED AN END TO MARTIAL LAW AND A POSITIVE REASSESSMENT OF THE STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS. HE ALSO DEMANDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HOLD TALKS WITH STUDENT LEADERS. THE CALLER CLAIMED THAT NI THREATENED TO LEAD A GENERAL STRIKE IF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE FAILED TO ACCEPT HIS DEMANDS. THE CALLER DID NOT STATE WHEN OR WHERE THE MEETING WAS HELD OR IF OUT-OF-TOWN MEMBERS ATTENDED.

PEOPLE'S DAILY COVERAGE SUGGESTS LI PENG GOVERNMENT HAS INCOMPLETE CONTROL OVER PRESS

¶17. THE MAY 20 AND 21 EDITIONS OF THE PEOPLE'S DAILY INDICATE THAT LI PENG MAY NOT HAVE TOTAL CONTROL OVER THE PRESS. THE FRONT PAGE OF THE MAY 20 EDITION SHOWS COVERAGE OF THE LI PENG AND YANG SHANGKUN SPEECHES OF MAY 19. IT SHOWS PICTURES OF YANG AND LI. HOWEVER, THE UPPER RIGHT SIDE OF THE FRONT PAGE DISPLAYS A LARGER PICTURE OF ZHAO ZIYANG ADDRESSING STUDENTS AT TIANANMEN ON THE MORNING OF MAY 19. BENEATH A HEADLINE STATING THAT ZHAO AND LI PENG VISITED THE STUDENTS, BOLDFACED CHARACTERS ANNOUNCE THAT "PARTY GENERAL SECRETARY ZHAO SINCERELY HOPES THAT STUDENTS WILL LIVE TO SEE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOUR MODERNIZATIONS."

¶18. THIS EDITION MUST HAVE BEEN PRINTED AFTER ZHAO'S RUMORED RESIGNATION/REMOVAL AND AFTER LI AND YANG DELIVERED THEIR MAY 19 CALLS FOR THE RESTORATION OF ORDER IN THE CAPITAL. THE COVERAGE OF ZHAO'S VISIT TO TIANANMEN, AS WELL AS THE USE OF HIS FORMAL TITLE FURTHER CLOUD THE QUESTION OF ZHAO'S PRESENT STATUS AND WHEREABOUTS.

¶19. THE FRONT PAGE OF THE MAY 21 EDITION OF THE PEOPLE'S DAILY HEADLINES THE IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW AND THE ISSUANCE OF BEIJING MUNICIPAL IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS. NEVERTHELESS, A SMALL BOX

IN THE LOWER LEFT OF THE PAGE HEADLINED "THE FIRST DAY OF MARTIAL LAW" REPORTS THAT AS OF 4:30 AM, MAY 21, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS CONTINUED TO OCCUPY TIANANMEN SQUARE AND THAT MARCHERS STILL ENTER THE SQUARE DURING THE DAY. WE READ THIS ARTICLE AS A SIGNAL TO PROVINCIAL READERS THAT MARTIAL LAW HAS SO FAR FAILED TO CONTROL THE SITUATION IN BEIJING. CONGENS SHANGHAI AND GUANGZHOU HAVE REPORTED THAT THERE IS A NEWS BLACKOUT ON EVENTS IN BEIJING IN THESE CITIES. WE DO NOT KNOW IF TODAY'S EDITION OF THE PEOPLE'S DAILY HAS BEEN DISTRIBUTED OUTSIDE OF BEIJING, HOWEVER.

LILLEY